

REMARKS

The Office action mailed on 30 December 2003 (Paper No. 1103), has been carefully considered. Allowance of claims 1 thru 5, 7 thru 13, 22 and 23 is appreciated.

Claims 14 thru 21 and 24 thru 27 are being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, claims 1 thru 5, 7 thru 13, 22 and 23 are pending in the application.

It is first noted that Applicant respectfully requests confirmation in writing in the next Office action of entry of the corrected formal Figures 6 and 8 previously filed on 2 September 2003.

On page 2 of the Office action, the Examiner objected to the specification for informalities. Specifically, the Examiner alleges that reference number 202 shown in Figure 11 is not explained in the specification. Accordingly, corrected Figure 11 is being submitted herewith, and reference number 202 is being deleted therefrom. Entry of the corrected formal Figure 11 and confirmation of the entry in writing are respectfully requested.

On pages 3-5 of the Office action, the Examiner rejected claims 14, 15, 25 and 18, 19 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103 for alleged unpatentability over Ohtake *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 5,411,822 in view of Palac, U.S. Patent No. 4,094,678. On pages 5-6 of the Office action, the Examiner rejected claims 24 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §103 for alleged unpatentability over Ohtake *et al.* '822 and Palac '678, and in further view of Yamada *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 3,883,770. On pages 6-8 of the Office action, the Examiner provisionally rejected claims 14

thru 21, 25 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103 for alleged unpatentability over Applicant's co-pending U.S. patent application No. 09/836550 in view of Palac '678. Since rejected claims 14 thru 21 and 24 thru 27 are being canceled, it is submitted that the invention recited in the pending claims is distinguishable from the prior art cited by the Examiner so as to preclude rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 or §103.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims of this application are in condition for allowance, and early issuance thereof is solicited. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicant's attorney.

No fee is incurred by this Amendment.

Respectfully submitted,



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